

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 RSC-01 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 /064 W

----- 001542

R 091641Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6377

INFO SECDEF

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

UNCLAS LONDON 16048

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MARR, UK

SUBJECT: SCHLESINGER VIEWS ON MASON: PRESS REPORTS

REF: LONDON 15875 AND 15891; SECDEF MSG 052335Z DEC 74

1. DAILY TELEGRAPH OF 7 DEC AND SUNDAY TIMES OF 8 DEC BOTH CARRY BRIEF ACCOUNTS OF SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S "FIRM DENIAL" OF EARLIER TELEGRAPH REPORT OF COOL SCHLESINGER-MASON RELATIONSHIP.

2. TELEGRAPH ARTICLE OF 7 DEC, BY STEPHEN BARBER AND DATELINED WASHINGTON, FOLLOWS UP REPORT OF DENIAL BY DISCUSSION OF ALLEGED SCHLESINGER VIEWS IN SOME DETAIL, NOTING THAT DURING HIS RECENT GERMAN TRIP, DEFENSE SECRETARY OBSERVED PRESENT BRITISH GOVERNMENT SIMPLY DOES NOT TAKE DEFENSE "SERIOUSLY" AS IS CASE IN BONN.

3. BARBER WRITES THAT, WHILE SCHLESINGER IS EMBARRASSED TO HAVE HIS FEELINGS ABOUT MASON BECOME PUBLIC, THE SECRETARY DOES INDEED CONSIDER HIM A "NONENTITY". BARBER IMPLIES THAT THIS ATTITUDE, WHICH CONTRASTS TO THE SECRETARY'S GENERAL FEELING TOWARDS BRITAIN OF "WARMTH AND FRIENDSHIP, TINGED WITH REGRET", ACCOUNTS FOR HIS DECISION NOT TO STOP OFF IN LONDON ON HIS WAY TO GERMANY LAST MONTH, A CUSTOMARY OCCURRENCE IN TIMES PAST.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, MILITARY PLANS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 DEC 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974LONDON16048
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740357-0102
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741250/aaaabqye.tel
Line Count: 62
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: LONDON 15875 AND 15891; SECDEF MSG 0, 52335Z DEC 74
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <30 SEP 2002 by ReddocGW>; APPROVED <05 FEB 2003 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SCHLESINGER VIEWS ON MASON: PRESS REPORTS
TAGS: MARR, UK, US, (SCHLESINGER, JAMES R), (MASON)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005